

Checklist: Conducting a Survey

Directions: Use this checklist to keep track of your activities as you design, conduct, and analyze surveys. You can indicate whether you have completed a particular activity by placing an X in the left-hand column. You can also record your notes at the bottom of the checklist.

| Done | Activity |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. <i>Keep it short.</i> Surveys are most effective when they are brief. Don't exceed one page. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. <i>Format and distribute your survey appropriately.</i> If you are distributing your survey on paper, make sure the text is readable, there is plenty of room to write, and the page isn't crowded with questions. If you are distributing your survey through email, you can either insert the survey questions into the body of your email message or attach the survey as a word processing file. If you are distributing your survey on the Web, you can: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | a. code your survey so that survey responses are added to a database (if you can create Web pages of this kind or know someone who can). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | b. ask respondents to copy the text on the page and paste it into an email message that they then send to you. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | c. link a word processing file containing your survey to a Web page and ask respondents to fill it out and return it to you as an email attachment. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | d. ask respondents to print the survey and fax or mail it back to you. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. <i>Explain the purpose of your survey.</i> Explaining who you are and how you will use the results of the survey in your research writing project can help increase a respondent's willingness to complete and return your survey. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. <i>Treat survey respondents with respect.</i> People respond more favorably when they think you are treating them as individuals rather than simply as part of a mailing list. When possible, use first-class stamps on surveys sent through the mail and, when appropriate, address potential respondents by name in cover letters or email messages. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. <i>Make it easy to return the survey.</i> If you are conducting a survey through the mail, be sure to include a stamped, self-addressed envelope. If you are conducting your survey on the Web or via email, be sure to provide directions for returning completed surveys. |
| Notes: | |
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